



From Darkness to
Light

Mart Samons

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

By
Mart Samons



FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE

Digitally Published by
THE GOSPEL TRUTH
www.churchofgodeveninglight.com

Preface

For some time I have felt led of the Lord to write of some of His dealings with me, as I see so many souls in darkness and they do not seem to know there is a way out. I want to assure you that there is a way out of that condition you are in. Also, I see a lot of people come to the altar to get saved who do not seem to get satisfied. I want you to know that God has a real experience for you. You can be delivered from sin, and you can know it. There is a real experience of sanctification for you, also.

I see some who do not seem to know their calling. I have heard some say they did not know if they were called to preach or not. Shame on the devil! Some do not seem to know how to be led of the Lord. I want you to know if you will be earnest enough for God to have His way in your life, God is big enough and great enough to make you know His will concerning you.

I send this forth with a burden for souls and to the glory of God. Without Him, none of it could have been possible. Praise His Holy Name!

May 1976

—Mart Samons

Green Bank, W.Va.

From Darkness to Light

This story started over 53 years ago in a little house in the eastern part of Kentucky. Born to parents who had very little of this world's goods, I was the seventh child of a family of ten. My dad was a coal miner. We lived on a hillside farm where things were very poor. It seems I was the sickly one of the family. A large part of the first thirty-four years of my life was spent in one affliction after another. Nearly everyone who knew me did not think I would live to manhood. I remember a cousin with whom I grew up—he was a sickly child, also. We used to wonder which one would die first. He died in his teens. As I look back now, I know it was only the mercy of the Lord that spared me. Some time in my early years, at seven or eight, I began to get pneumonia. I think I had it five times. I remember how the doctor would come, and say there was not much hope for me. One time the fever got so high that it caused my eyes to cross, and if I wanted to see anything it had to be held over to the side of me. There were very few winters that I was not sick. One time I was just getting over a case of pneumonia when my brother bought a new car. I went out to see it, and the next day I had double pneumonia. They would put some Vick's salve on red flannel and put it on my chest and care for me as best they could. My dear father and mother stood by me day and night.

In my early teens, I fell from a tree and broke my leg above the knee. I was laid up for some weeks. As soon as I could walk good again, I fell and broke it below the knee.

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

About this time, I felt a longing for something. Of course, I did not know what it was. I had already taken up the habit of smoking, around the age of eight or nine years, even though I had to slip around to do it. Of course, my dad and those around me used tobacco. I was just an ignorant boy. (A word to parents: How do you expect your children not to use tobacco if you do it before them?) This smoking and chewing was against my already weak body and made things worse. The first experience I had with drinking occurred around the age of twelve years. Some other boys and I got some moonshine and drank it. When I got home, I was, oh, so sick! My parents thought I had got poisoned on something. After that, I drank about every chance I could get, and this continued on for the next 22 years. Of course, this was bad for my health, and I was sick more than I was well.

Every once in a while, I would feel a deep longing for something, but my soul was going deeper and deeper in darkness. Through all this sickness, I did not get very much education. I managed to get to the fifth grade. As for my religious training, I just did not have any. My parents were Baptist people. I had heard there was a hell, and if you did not get saved you would go there, but no one told me how to get saved. In my early teens, I had a dream that followed me through the years. I dreamed the end of time had come. I remember the whole world was on fire around me. It was not like fire that you see burning, but it was a liquid that ran like water. I thought that I knew it was the end of time. My mother was standing on the porch, but she told me that I could not go with her. This only increased that longing for something I felt in my heart. I knew there was something I needed, but oh, the darkness! My mother died in 1948. I believe she lived to all the light she had.

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

Around the age of sixteen, I became sick again. This time I had some kind of bowel trouble. I guess that was the nearest to death that I have ever been. The doctors said there was not any hope for me. Three of them gave me up to die. I remember one night, they had already contacted the funeral home and my family was waiting around for me to go. My mother was standing over me crying. Something told me I was not going to die. I opened my eyes and told them I was not going to die. Soon after that I began to get better. As I look back now, I know it was the mercy of the Lord. After that, I began to drink real heavy. One time we were riding a freight train and I was drinking. I was thrown off and my nose was broken and all the skin scraped off my face and chest. Another time I was in a car wreck and my jaw was broken. What a terrible thing to be brought up in darkness!

When I was nineteen, I joined the Navy. This did not help things any as it seemed to lead me deeper in darkness. But it seemed there was a protecting Hand over me. I have seen others die; seen bodies floating in the water, with shells falling around us. My soul was so deep in darkness, that I do not remember being afraid. One outstanding incident that I have always felt the Lord was in, concerned a ship I was on. I got off it just before it went overseas. The next time I saw it, enemy planes had attacked this ship and something like half the crew were killed. Through drinking, I got into much trouble. Every once in a while this longing for something would come back. There were times things would be so bad I would get alone and cry and cry. About five years later, I got out of the Navy but I began to drink heavier. Then things got so bad I was tempted to take my own life two or three times. I had nothing to look forward to, or to live for. I finally went back to my hometown. It seemed the enemy was determined to destroy me as I was involved

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

in two or three car wrecks which could have killed me. Another time, I was beaten up by some men and robbed, and left for dead.

About this time, I met a precious girl, who was to become my wife, later. As my name was so bad, she was forbidden to see me, as most nice girls were. As I look back, I know the Lord had her for me. We were married on Oct. 7, 1949, after much opposition from her father. It was through her sweet life that a little light and a little hope began to shine through. Soon after we were married, the Lord began to deal with my soul. We did not know anything about the Church of God, or anything about holiness. My wife belonged to the Baptist church, so we started going there. During a week's revival meeting I went to the altar almost every night, and wept and prayed. With no one to instruct me, I never got saved. As I look back, I do not believe the Lord wanted me to be saved there. He knew the future. After that, I was back at my drinking and running around. We were blessed with three healthy boys, but I was so miserable and so unsettled, that I did not enjoy my precious wife or my wonderful children. Of course, not being settled, we moved from place to place. The first seven years of our marriage, we moved about eighteen times. We finally moved to Fairborn, Ohio, where my wife started going to a Nazarene Church where she got saved. Because of the way I was living, she soon gave up, and decided to go deep in sin with me. It seemed about all she ever wanted, was to please me. She took up smoking again, and also started drinking and dancing. That was something she had never done before.

About this time, I had a terrible affliction to come upon me. As I walked in the house one evening from work, a ringing started in my head. I thought it would go away soon, but it never stopped. No matter what I did, or what medicine I took, it didn't help. About this time we moved again, to a house across the street from Bro. William

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

McCoy's daughter. He was the pastor at Dayton, Ohio. Through Bro. McCoy's daughter, my wife started going to Sunday school. This was our first contact with the saints. I began going with her some. It seemed this longing I'd had for so many years was increasing and the affliction I had was getting worse all the time. I sought help from many physicians, but like the woman in the Bible, I grew worse. The saints were praying now, and more light was coming my way. Bro. McCoy would teach what it meant to be saved, and how to get it. The more light that came, the more troubled I was. Then the Lord began to talk face to face with me, so to speak. Many were the nights I would lie in bed with the ringing so loud I could not go to sleep, with tears streaming from my eyes. The Lord would whisper in that sweet low voice, "If you will give me your heart, I will take care of everything." But the powers of darkness had such a hold on me it was hard to get out of it. I was still looking to man for my help. I went to the hospital and had my nose operated on and my tonsils taken out, but nothing I did helped. This voice kept saying, "Give me your heart." In the fall of 1957, someone told me about a place in Minnesota that could determine my physical condition. I made arrangements to go to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. With all their knowledge, they could not find what was wrong. I was just out a few hundred dollars and worse than before. As I look back now, I know it was the Lord dealing with my heart. I can tell you, the doctor cannot help that, for I tried the best. So I came home with nowhere else to go. The saints were praying, and I was getting worse all the time.

Around the first of November, 1957, Bro. and Sis. Sam Abbott started a meeting in Dayton, Ohio. My wife still had the fear of God before her, as she had always wanted to live for the Lord. Sometime before this, she had been drinking, and had gone to a Catholic Church with my sister-in-law. While there, the fear of God came

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

upon her. She promised the Lord she would never drink anymore, or go out to places of the world, and she has kept her word. We had already been going to Sunday school with the saints, so when they held a revival meeting my wife wanted to go. Finally, she talked me into it. I believe the first night we went, she went forward and gave her heart to the Lord. Now I was really in trouble! I was not in darkness anymore. I knew what the trouble was, and what I needed to do. But the devil was holding on till the very end. I did not get saved that night, but oh, I was under conviction! I remember the last drink I took. My wife and I were out somewhere. She did not drink anymore, but I ordered whiskey. It would hardly go down. After 22 years or so, thank God, that was the last one. I kept going to the revival every night. My wife was saved on Saturday night. I kept going through Thursday. On Thursday, Wife came down sick; also two of the boys became sick. All this time, I would cry myself to sleep many nights. Thursday, she called me home from work. She had already decided to trust the Lord for her healing, but I gave the boys some aspirins. I came home from work in the evening and Wife was still sick. She asked me if I was going to meeting. I told her I wanted to. No one will ever know the struggle I had going on inside. The devil was holding on with all his power. That sweet voice was saying, "Give me your heart." I do not know what Bro. Abbott preached about that night. I hardly knew where I was. After the message, they sang two or three songs. The devil was still holding me back. The preacher said he had done all that he knew to do, and gone as far as he could go. It did not sound like Bro. Abbott to me, it was the Lord. I believe I had gone as far as God was going to go. I have always believed that was my last chance; anyway I went forward. No one had to tell me to pray, I was ready to give it all up. I had twenty some years of sins to repent of. When I fully repented, the most wonderful thing that I had ever experienced happened to

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

me. Praise the Lord! I will never forget that night. The Lord took all that load away. It felt so good, I started to laugh. I do not know how long I laughed, but I was the happiest man in the whole world. As I write this some eighteen years later I am still happy. The Bible says in II Cor. 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." I can truly say a new life began right there.

I went home that night, November 7, 1957, a new man. As I have already said, I had been smoking ever since I was just a boy. I never could give up cigarettes even though I had tried several times. I had smoked one just before I went into the chapel that night. As I was on my way home, they came to my mind, for the first time since I had gotten saved. I had them in my coat pocket. I took them out, rolled down the window and threw them out. I never desired to smoke one since. Even though the flesh craved them for a few days, the Lord had delivered me from the very desire of them. After that I could hardly stay in the room where they were. Instead of a craving for them, God put a real dislike in me for them. Another wonderful thing happened that night. Remember, my wife was sick all that day, and two of the children. My wife says about the time I got saved, even though I was ten miles away, all the pain left her. When I came into the house, the lights were out. Before she ever saw me, she said "You got saved tonight." I told her something happened. The next morning, if I remember right, the children were well. What a mighty God we serve!

We awoke the next morning to start a new life. I had never read the Bible very much. I guess the only verse I knew was John 3:16, and I did not know anything about praying. But we had been going to Sunday school, so I had learned a few things. My first test was: What was I going to tell the men I worked with? The men did not

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

know much about spiritual things. This worried me. But I knelt down to pray before I went to work. I was barbering at that time. On my way to work, the Lord flooded my soul. When I said “Praise the Lord!” out loud, the blessing was so great I thought I would have to stop the car. As I got to work, I still did not know what I was going to say. The Lord spoke to me and said, “Do not tell them anything. Just live the life before them.” That is what I tried to do, and am still trying to do. But it did not take long for them to know something had happened.

I mentioned earlier the terrible ringing I had and for which I had sought help from many physicians without finding it. I was so carried away with my new-found joy, that I had not noticed that the dear Lord had not only saved my soul, but He had done what men could not do! He had healed my body, also. After all those years, He was not only my Saviour, but my Healer as well. Praise His holy name!

After living in deep sin so long there were a lot of things around the house that had to be cleaned out, so we began house-cleaning. Since we were both delivered from cigarettes, we did not need any ash trays around. The beer and whiskey were all cleaned out; also cards, comic books and a lot of other literature that was not fit to have around. Then came the big thing. We had two TV sets. I knew the church taught against them, but this is where I had spent many hours. In fact, it was my number one idol. But the Spirit of the Lord was bringing more light to me now, and I could see how wrong it was to have them in our home. I remember how our children would sit on their knees and watch it until they would almost wear a hole in the rug. One of the boys used to have a lot of trouble with his eyes. I am so thankful we were saved while our children were young. Some may not agree, but I believe the TV is the number one tool the

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

devil uses to corrupt our children's minds today. This generation that is causing so much trouble is the one that has had TV all their lives. We moved both of the TV sets out of our home. We would not have one in our home now under any condition. Light surely brings a lot of responsibility, as we were finding out.

Divine healing was one thing I had not heard much about, let alone practiced. We had heard it taught a little, but we soon found out there was more to it than just hearing about it. You remember that I had been taking medicine most of my life. When we got sick the first thing we thought of was the doctor, so just to quit all at once was a big step. But we had light on it now and we knew the Lord wanted us to trust Him for soul and body. I will say, the devil surely painted some dark pictures. He told me I would die. I mentioned earlier the condition I had since I was in my teens, when the doctors gave me up to die. Ever since that, I had taken medicine for that condition. The devil said, if you don't, you will die, so after I had been saved for a couple of weeks, I yielded to this. But light rates responsibility, and I felt much condemned about it. I went to God for forgiveness, and asked Him to restore my joy, which He did. I promised Him I would never take any more medicine as long as I lived, by His grace and help. I was still just trusting Him day by day. The dear Lord has been so precious to me, to show me plainly what He wants me to do. Of course, we were trusting our children in His care, also. Our first test came after we had been saved about six weeks. Our oldest son was in school. Wife and I were away one day, when he became sick at school. They called, and a neighbor went to school and brought him home. When we got back, he was across the street at her house. We brought him home. We had always taken our children to the doctor for every little thing, but this time we took him to the Lord in prayer. We did not know much about prayer and did not even know how to agree in prayer. Wife went into one room and

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

I went into the other, where we called on the Lord, who heard prayer. Within ten minutes, our son was completely well. This was a great encouragement to our faith.

The devil tries to take away all the light we get. I still was not settled on trusting the Lord for healing. In March, 1958, a dear sister in the Lord, Sister Sharp, was real sick and had been for some time. Almost everyone who knew her felt it was time for her to leave this world. She was so bad she could not turn herself, or could hardly move. One evening, Wife and I felt like visiting her. It seems the Lord impressed others to visit her, too, that night. There were ten or twelve there. After they sang and prayed some, Bro. William McCoy read her a tract on healing. Then he asked her if she wanted the Lord to touch her, or did she want to be completely healed. I was taking all this in, as I wanted to see what was going to happen. They anointed her with oil and laid on hands and prayed. After they prayed they read James 5:14. She told her son to get her robe as she was going to get up. I wanted to see this. Sis. Sharp had both of her limbs off, so they brought her wheelchair and she climbed into it. Every pain, every bit of soreness was gone, and she was completely well. I know this was God's way of showing me light on divine healing. That settled it with me. I have never doubted healing since that time. Since then I have seen many people healed. The Lord healed our child of asthma. I saw Him heal cancer. I am almost sure a man was dead and was raised, in answer to prayer. Bro. O'Neal Pratt of Holly Hill, South Carolina, can verify this. I have seen Him heal lung trouble, heart attacks, and many other things. It is wonderful to have light and be able to trust Him for everything. He is the same, yesterday, and today and forever. (Heb. 13:8). There were many precious things I was still in the dark about, but the Lord was leading me into more light.

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

The night I got saved, I thought I would never need anything else, but I found myself lacking something. I did not have the power that I felt I ought to have, and was not able to live like I wanted to. One song we sing says: "There's a foe in the temple not subject to God." I heard the saints talk about being sanctified, and two works of grace. I went to the altar for something but I did not get anything. Then the devil got my mind confused. I was trying to walk in light that I did not have. I began to seek God earnestly. The Lord never turns away a seeking soul. The Lord sent a minister by, who brought a message on sanctification. I did not get what I needed, but I found out what it was that I needed. I also found out I did not have it. From that time on, I began seeking the Lord for an experience of sanctification. That was in the spring of 1958. That summer we went to the Myrtle, Mo. camp meeting. This was the first meeting like this we had ever been to. When we arrived it seemed almost like heaven to us. We had never seen people who seemed so happy, and who seemed to care so much for one another. They took us in, just like we were one of the family, which we found out later we were. Such love and unity I had never seen before. People from different states, different walks of life, and different colors were all rejoicing together. As I mentioned earlier, my heart was longing for something. Well, this was it. I remember how I was rejoicing in the meeting for the first few days. Then one morning the brother who had preached the message that had shown me that I was not sanctified, walked in with his wife. Something came on me that took my joy away. I went to where I was staying that night and earnestly sought the Lord. He made me to know that He would take care of it in the morning. The Lord showed me that Brother Gibson would preach and what he would preach on. The next morning, I went to service expecting to receive what I wanted so much. When time came to preach, as the Lord had already shown me, Brother Gibson

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

arose and preached on the text where Jesus prayed for the blind man. “He asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.” (Mark 8:23-25) Praise the Lord! That was me. When I got saved I had received some light, but I could only see dimly, but the Lord wanted me to see clearly. The preacher brought out how God's plan of salvation included two works of grace in the heart. I found out that when I repented of my sins that He was faithful to forgive my sins, and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness. (I John 1:9) I found out that when I was born, there was sin in my heart. (Psalms 51:5) That caused me automatically to go into sin when I came to the age of accountability before God, which as I have stated before, had led me into deep darkness. Thank God for the light that He shone into my darkened soul. Now, I found out that this sin that I was born with was not taken out when I got saved. He had forgiven the sins that I had committed, and through His blood and the power of the Holy Spirit I could have this purged out and be sanctified wholly. (Rom. 15:16, I Thess. 5:23) I found out in order to receive this experience, I must make a complete consecration of my soul, mind, and body to the Lord.

(Romans 12:2) When the preacher sat down, that is what I did. I went forward and bowed at an altar of prayer, and made a complete surrender to the Lord. When I did, His Holy Spirit came into my heart, and cleansed out that sinful nature I was born with. I was filled with the power of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 1:8) I felt a heavenly quietness surround me, and such peace I had never known. Now I knew I had the gift of the Holy Spirit. Oh, things began to look so much clearer! His word became more real to me. Now I had His spirit in my life to enlighten me and to teach me, (John 14:26) to lead me into all truth, (John 16:32). From that time on, my life took

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

on new meaning. He taught me that my body was His temple, (I Cor. 6:19), that it belonged to Him now and I was to let Him use it any way He wanted to. Now the light was shining brightly as He had said He would lead and guide me into all truth. He began to lead me.

One thing I had always been confused on was which church was right. Where I was reared, most of the folks were Baptist people. I remember when I was young, they used to say if you were not one of them, you could not go to heaven. After I grew up and left home, I found out there were lots of people who had never heard of their little group. I found a lot of people who believed in other churches, and they said they were right, too. Some of them said if you did not go their way, you would be lost. I could never see how they could all be right. This followed me through most of my sinful life, and I would wonder who was right. After I got saved, I was still in the dark about it. As I continued to walk in the light, the Spirit of the Lord began to reveal some things to me. Then the Lord gave me a vision. I saw a beautiful cedar tree. As I looked upon this tree, I noticed it was a perfectly formed tree. It was not a natural tree, but was made of parts which were different sizes, shapes and colors. It looked just like a picture puzzle. Every piece fit perfectly, every piece had its place, and would not fit anywhere else. Then I remembered reading where He said that He was the head of the body, the Church. (Col. 1:18) I Cor. 12:27 says, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular," and I Cor. 12:18, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." Also, in Acts 2:47, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." I thought. Praise God, this is it! When anyone gets saved, no matter how big or little, what color or nationality, that one is born into God's family or church, and He places each one just where He wants him. Thank God for light. I saw that I was a member of Christ's body, which is His Church. I have

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

never been confused anymore about which Church is right. God has only one Church. We are born into it. (Psalms 87:5) The only way I can get out of it is to sin. (Exodus 32:33).

I had a wonderful Bible teacher for a pastor. As he would teach, I would find the things the Lord was showing me were all recorded in the Bible. As I continued to receive more light, it brought more responsibility. Then the Lord gave me the gift of helps. (1 Cor. 12:28).

How we enjoyed working for the Lord! It seems we got a special blessing out of helping others. How we enjoyed helping others. How we enjoyed helping the ministers in any way we could! To clean the meeting house, or to help someone who was sick or in need of help—that was where we wanted to be. I was working at the barber shop then. Many times, my wife would meet me when I got off work. I would eat as she drove us to visit or to do something for the Lord. There would be weeks at a time when we would be out every night, sometimes until twelve o'clock. We would bring our little boys home, put them in the bed, and the next morning get them up, pray for them and they would go right on to school. A lot of times, they would go an entire year and never miss a day. As I look back now, I can see the Lord was preparing me for greater things. I began to be restless, it seemed there was more the Lord was trying to show me. I began to seek the Lord about it. Once again the Lord gave me a vision. I saw a high mountain. This mountain had no trees on it, but as I looked to the top, I could see light shining from the other side. The best way I can explain it is to liken it to traveling at night. Sometimes you can see the lights of a city, before you reach it, reflecting up in the sky. I remember talking to one of the older ministers about it. He said just keep climbing the mountain, and when I got to the top, I would be able to see what it was. For almost

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

a year, I kept climbing. The more I prayed and sought the Lord, the brighter the light became. In November, 1960, something happened to cause me to get more earnest in my seeking to find out what was on the other side of that mountain. Many nights I would be up until two or three o'clock reading, praying, and seeking. On the second Sunday in April, 1961, on an all-day meeting in Dayton, it looked like there would not be a minister there. I was in my room earnestly seeking the Lord about it. I was asking Him why there were not more preachers. I felt the presence of the Lord all around. It seemed the room was filled with light. A voice spoke and said, "What about you?" It was so real, it stopped me from praying. I asked the Lord, "What about me?" He asked me if I would preach for Him. I said I would. There was more to it than that, but it was so real, I have never doubted one time my calling. I did not preach that day, but the following week, those words kept ringing in my ears, "What about you?" During the week, some scriptures came to my mind. Then some more along the same line. Finally, I recognized the Lord had given me a message. At that time the saints in Dayton were going to Union City, Indiana, once a month on Sunday afternoon for meeting. The Lord had made me to know He wanted me to preach up there. I do not know if I have ever been so scared. Of course, the devil was working hard, too. During prayer, I looked over at Bro. McCoy. He was looking at some scripture. The devil almost scared me out. But when time came for the Word, Bro. McCoy gave plenty of room. I got up and preached on "Living Water." The Lord blessed and one girl was saved, and is still saved today. I had reached the top of the mountain. Now, I knew what it was about. But then it seemed my troubles started. The devil tried to confuse my mind. I thought I had to know everything in the Bible. I got in bondage. The Lord would give me a message, I would get up and then it would not come out. The people began to find fault. They said I was not called to preach.

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

Oh, do have mercy on young preachers! One Sunday, I got up to preach and made a flop, right while I was trying to preach. I told the Lord that was my last try; I was going to quit and was not going to try it anymore. I spoke to my wife about it on our way home. But when I got home, I went to my place of prayer, and got down real humble before the Lord. I do not know how long I prayed, but the Lord visited me again. He gave me part of the first chapter of Jeremiah. “Be not afraid of their faces for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.” (verse 8) He told me He wanted me to “root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.” (verse 10) “And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.” (verse 19) Then He said, “be bold as a lion, and harmless as a dove.” I came out of that room a new man. It was not long after that until the Lord gave me liberty to preach His word. But I had another battle. The Lord was blessing me, but the devil tried to exalt me, and make me think I could preach. Some of the people tried to exalt me. Some tried to discourage. But as I look back now, that was God’s school He puts us through. I believe there is a qualifying the Lord puts us through after we are called to preach, before He sends us out. Then I began to get confused again, not knowing what the Lord wanted me to do. Some said I was a pastor, others said I was an evangelist. The Lord has been so wonderful to give me light on what He wants me to do. I had another dream. I climbed a high mountain and found a small hole I could just crawl through. As I got out on the other side, I saw a beautiful garden. As I looked upon it, a voice spoke and said, “You see this row?” Pointing to one row the voice said, “That’s your row, you take care of it.” I have been trying to hoe my row ever since, and keep it clean. Oh, I had such zeal for the Lord! The devil tried to tell me I ought to get out and preach. But by this time, I knew the Lord could make

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

me to know what He wanted me to do. I had some good advice during that time. Brother Murphy Allen used to stay at our home when he would come to Dayton for meeting. I remember he used to say, “Wait.” I am glad I did. I stayed there and preached for two years. I don’t think I preached away from home more than two or three times. But, oh, how I appreciated those two years of training! As time went on, I began to lose interest in my work. I would be standing cutting hair sometimes, and my mind would be somewhere else. I could visualize myself sitting somewhere under a tree getting a message for the night services. I could imagine seeing people coming to the altar to be saved. The burden began to get heavier. The place where I worked was quite wicked, being a six-chair barber shop. I used to pray for the Lord to let me change jobs. It seems He always impressed me to stay there. As I earnestly sought the Lord, in the spring of 1963, the Lord spoke to me. He said He wanted me to quit my job and go to all the camp meetings that I could that summer. I told my wife what the Lord had shown me and she said if that is what He wants, that’s what we had better do. I gave the man I worked for a two-week’s notice. When the day came to quit my job, I went home and told Wife, “This is it.” If I remember, she sat down and had a good cry. It was quite a step for us to make, with three children to rear, house payment, car payment, and all the other bills that go along with a household. As I write this now, it has been thirteen years since that day we left all to follow the Lord. It seems we were as Abraham of old. When the Lord told him to go, he went, not knowing where he was going. But the Lord was with him. I can truly say the Lord has been with us all these years. He has supplied all our needs—physical, spiritual, and financial up unto this time.

We went out that first year in 1963, not knowing what the Lord had in mind. I had in mind to come back home after the summer was over, and get another job. But the Lord had other plans. We left in

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

the spring and went to Holly Hill, South Carolina, for the first camp meeting that summer. You remember that we had not been out among the people much up until this time, so we really did not know what to expect. We preached a few times in Holly Hill. Then we went to Hammond, La. camp meeting. This is where the Lord really anointed me to preach His Word. His Spirit was so working in our lives that sometimes when we were preaching, we would not know we were in the world for 30 to 40 minutes at a time. One outstanding thing took place while there that I will never forget. Before we went the Lord had given me a message to preach there. The Lord used me many times to preach, and I still had not preached the message I came with. The Lord had made me to know that He wanted me to bring my message on the last Saturday morning of the meeting. But as I had brought a message on Friday night, I decided I would not preach anymore. So, Saturday morning I did not even take my Bible to service with me. In the meantime, Wife was late coming to meeting. She saw I had left my Bible so she had one of the boys bring it. Service had already started and time came for the preacher to get up. No one moved. I guess there were 15 to 18 preachers there. But all kept their seats. Someone suggested we all pray again and we got down to pray. The Lord spoke to me and said, "It is Saturday morning." Here I was without my Bible. I did not know what to do. Just as we got up from prayer, here came one of my boys with my Bible. I went ahead and got up. The Lord wonderfully blessed. There must have been 50 at the altar that day. It makes us to know the Lord can still take care of His pulpit and put the one He wants to preach in it, if we will wait on Him. The Lord so wonderfully used us that people began to try to exalt us, and I had to fight against this. After Hammond, we went to Monark Springs, Mo., camp meeting, then to the camp meeting at Myrtle, Mo. It was there, after the brethren had recognized the gift the Lord had given me, that I was ordained as a

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

minister in the Church of God. This to me was the highest calling in the world.

It did not take long for me to recognize that the Lord had not called me to be a part-time preacher. Now that the summer was over, I wondered what I would do. My life was in His hands now. It was not long until I began to receive calls to come and hold meetings. Since that time, I have never been without something to do. We have always had more calls than we were able to fill. But it has been wonderful working for the Lord, the one who brought me out of darkness into this wonderful Light. We have traveled thousands of miles and been in many meetings. We have had the privilege of seeing many souls brought out of darkness to light. We saw their lives changed and they came forth new creatures in Christ Jesus. We have also seen many healed by the power of God. He has been our Healer and Keeper for all these years. We have not had to look to the world for anything. We marvel at how the Lord has supplied all of our needs. When we left our job to work full time for the Lord, we had no promises of a salary or income of any kind. I have done very little work with my hands. I have never taken up an offering for myself or have never asked anyone for money. The Lord has supplied our needs in every way. When we have had a need, we just took it to the Lord in prayer. I remember one time when we were very low financially and our bills were coming up. I was getting very concerned about it. But my wife, who had more faith than I, said not to worry about it. She got up one morning and said she had dreamed that we received a \$200 check in the mail. I admit I did not think very much about it, maybe laughed a little. But when the mail came, she brought the mail in and said, "Here is your \$200 check." What made it such a blessing was that we did not know who supplied the money for the check. The dear Lord talked to someone. I know whoever it was got a blessing out of it, and we did, too. This way,

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

the one who gives gets blessed and the one who receives it, also. And the Lord gets glory out of it. If we live close to God, we will not have to beg for money. God will supply our needs. After the Lord had called me out in His work, Wife and the boys were left at home, without a car. As they had quite a way to go to services, and other places, we felt a need for her to have a car to use. As we were living by faith now, we began to pray for it. We just kept telling the Lord about it. We were just praying for an old car, but Wife said one day that if we would believe, the Lord would give us a new one. Not many days after that we got a check in the mail with a letter saying they understood that someone was collecting money to buy us a car so Wife could have one at home. We did not know who it was or anything about it, until the Lord had already worked it out. Oh, Praise the Lord! We could tell many times how God has worked beyond anything we could ask or think. Since that time, the Lord has provided us with three new cars to use in His service. I remember one time in the Bible when Jesus sent His disciples out and they came back. He asked them if they lacked anything. I can truly say I have not lacked anything. He has paid all our bills, healed all our diseases, and given us grace to live free from sin each day. We are much encouraged to finish up what we have started to do.

Since the boys are out of school and two of them married, Wife has been traveling with me. It has been such a blessing, as we can do so much more for the Lord together. We have been working with the tent for some years now. We enjoy working for the One who has done so much for us. But we realize that if we want to continue to enjoy these great blessings, we must walk in the light He has given us. He said, "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you . . ." (John 12:35). In another place He said, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matt. 6:23). If going back brings darkness greater than what I was in, I

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

surely do not want any part of it. Pray that I will always walk in the Light. The Bible says, “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.” We have had many wonderful experiences of the leading of the Lord.

After the Lord began to bless us in our ministry, we had a number of offers to come and pastor some of the largest congregations. But we had learned to wait on the Lord’s direction. One time, we were thinking seriously of moving to another place and we were making our plans to move. I remember how the Lord put a brick wall about 40 feet high across the road we were to travel. I told Wife we could not cross that wall. So we stayed. Some years later, we went to Kentucky in a tent meeting. There was quite a bit of interest in the Truth there, so we began to think of moving there. As we prayed about it, the Lord revealed to Wife that we should move. I still had to know the will of God for myself. I write this with a burden, as I see many moving out of the will of the Lord. The Lord, in His wonderful dealings with me, gave me a dream. I dreamed there was a woman lost in a wilderness near our home. She came up and looked in our window at me. Her face was aglow, but her eyes were pleading with me for help. She had a baby in her arms without any clothes on. As I awoke, and pondered over the dream, it came to me that the woman was the Church. The baby represented those dear people there in Kentucky. There she was pleading with me to help them. I told Wife we could move now. We made ready to move. We have never had to doubt one time the Lord did not move us. You can know the will and the mind of God. As I write this now, we are in a tent meeting. Surely we have no other desire but to continue in this same truth that brought us out of that darkened pit of sin we were in, to this wonderful light. We desire the prayers of all God’s people that we may walk in all the light that He reveals to our hearts.

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

I pray that this will be a blessing to some soul along the way.

Yours for all the Truth,
Bro. and Sis. Mart Samons

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

“Along a dark and gloomy path
I groped beneath the shades of death—
No hope beyond my dying breath,
Till light from the Saviour came.
My darkness now is passed away,
In Jesus all is perfect day;
And peace and comfort ever stay.
Since Christ is my perfect light.
O Jesus, to my heart so sweet,
Thy word’s a light unto my feet;
How holy, happy, and complete,
I walk in the precious Light.
All glory to My Saviour’s name!
To do thy will my highest aim;
Thy favor’s more than earthly fame,
Thy smile is my constant light.
In the light of God,
Now my soul is singing,
All, all is bright.
In the light of God,
I’m now in the light of God.”

